REMARKS

Following the amendment of the Claims as outlined above, Claims 21-29, 31-39 and 41 are pending in this Application. Claim 21 is an independent claim. Dependent Claims 22-29, 31-39 and 41 all depend directly or indirectly from independent Claim 21.

Independent Claim 21 has been amended to incorporate the limitations contained in dependent Claims 30 and 40. Dependent Claims 30 and 40 have been cancelled. Dependent Claims 31-34 and 41 have been amended to change their dependencies from cancelled Claim 30 to amended independent Claim 21. Dependent claim 33 has also been amended to delete the word "solid" and to substitute the word "liquid". No new Claims have been added.

Claims 21-41 were all rejected in the Office Action dated July 1, 2003 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,943,448 (Lacourciere).

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of Claims 21-29, 31-39 and 41 has been overcome by the amendments and remarks contained herein.

Lacourciere teaches the application to live high voltage terminals and bus work of a liquified coating material which comprises a solid dielectric material mixed with a liquifying solvent (Column 2, lines 29-31; Column 4, lines 24-29; Column 9, lines 24-46). Lacourciere expressly teaches that the coating material is conductive in its liquified state due to the liquifying solvent, which solvent is mixed with the dielectric material in order to liquify the solid coating material (Column 4, lines 24-29; Column 9, lines 24-46).

As a result of the conductive properties of the liquifying solvent, Lacourciere teaches as an important feature of the invention that the coating material must be electrically isolated from the application system (Column 4, line 1 to Column 9, line 46; and in particular Column 4, lines 1-56; Column 9, lines 24-46).

In contrast, the Applicant's invention as claimed in amended independent Claim 21 requires that "the dielectric material is selected to have a suitable insulating strength in a liquid form as it is applied to the electrified high voltage powerline to allow for its safe application". Furthermore, the Applicant's invention as claimed in amended independent Claim 21 requires that the dielectric material by applied "in a liquid form". These two limitations contained in amended independent Claim 21 provide two very important distinctions over Lacourciere.

First, the dielectric material of the Applicant's invention as claimed in amended independent Claim 21 is applied "in a liquid form". The coating material in Lacourciere is described as being in a "liquified state" and comprises solid particles which are dissolved in a liquid solvent. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the "liquid form dielectric material" as claimed in amended independent Claim 21 is patentably distinguishable from the "liquified solid dielectric material" which is described in Lacourciere. In other words, it is respectfully submitted that the liquid form dielectric material as claimed in the Applicant's invention is not the same as the solid dielectric material mixed with a liquifying solvent which is described in Lacourciere.

Second, unlike Lacourciere, the Applicant's invention as claimed in amended independent Claim 21 does not require that the dielectric material be electrically isolated from the application system because the dielectric material itself provides the suitable insulating strength to allow for safe application.

Although the Examiner has stated in the Office Action that the electrical isolation of the coating material in Lacourciere "reads on the liquid form hav[ing] "suitable insulating strength" for safe application", it is respectfully submitted that this is an unreasonable interpretation of the limitation contained in amended independent Claim 21. It is respectfully submitted that a fair interpretation of the Applicant's invention as claimed in amended independent Claim 21 is that it is the properties of the dielectric material itself and not the properties of the application system which provide the "suitable insulating strength".

Consequently, the Applicant's invention removes a very significant technical challenge which is faced in Lacourciere as a result of the need in Lacourciere to isolate thoroughly the coating material from the application system. Because the dielectric material of the Applicant's invention as claimed in amended independent Claim 21 itself provides a "suitable insulating strength" to allow for safe application, the design of the application system in the Applicant's invention may be greatly simplified while providing a reduced safety risk.

As a result of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that Lacourciere does not teach, describe or suggest a dielectric material as a coating material which is applied in a liquid form and which itself provides a suitable insulating strength to allow for safe application without the need to electrically isolate the dielectric material from the application system. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that Lacourciere does not teach, describe or suggest such a method having the steps set out in amended independent Claim 21.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that amended independent Claim 21 is allowable and allowance of amended independent Claim 21 is respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims 22-29, 31-39 and 41 all depend directly or indirectly from amended independent Claim 21. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent Claims are allowable for the distinctions defined therein as well as for the reasons supporting the allowability of amended independent Claim 21, and allowance of dependent Claims 22-29, 31-39 and 41 is also respectfully requested.

In particular, amended dependent Claim 33 has been amended to provide specifically that "the selected dielectric material is formulated from a plurality of liquid dielectric material components.". It is respectfully submitted that the limitations contained in amended dependent Claim 33 further distinguish the dielectric material of the Applicant's invention from the coating material described in Lacourciere, since the dielectric material in Lacourciere is a solid material which must be "liquified" with the solvent.

In addition, dependent Claim 41 provides specifically that the dielectric material of the Applicant's invention is comprised of a plurality of dielectric material components and that "each of the dielectric material components will provide the suitable insulating strength" to allow for safe application in a liquid form. It is respectfully submitted that the limitations contained in dependent Claim 41 also further distinguish the dielectric material of the Applicant's invention from the coating material described in Lacourciere, since the solvent in Lacourciere clearly does not satisfy the limitations contained in dependent Claim 41.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that this Application is in condition for allowance and allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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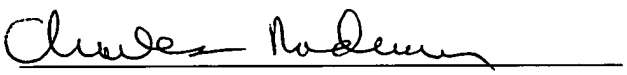

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Dated December 24, 2003

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